

Message Text

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ACTION SS-30

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /031 W
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O R 101044Z NOV 73 ZFF-2
FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1726
INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA NIACT IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM NIACT IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T LAGOS 9023

EXDIS

ADDIS OR KHARTOUM FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY NEWSOM

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, OAU, NI, XF
SUBJECT: MIDDLE EAST

REF: ADDIS ABABA 12721 AND 12725 (NOTAL)

SUMMARY: MEA PERMANENT SECRETARY JOE IYALLA PLEASSED THAT USG
CHOOSES BRIEF NIGERIA ON ME. ASSERTS FMG DECIDEDLY PRO ARAB
BUT LONGS FOR SETTLEMENT THAT GUARANTEES EACH NATION, INCLUDING
ISR/LJ PEACEFUL EXISTENCE. ENDORSES GENERAL APPROACH USG
MAKING TO PROBLEM. END SUMMARY

1. ON NOVEMBER 9 I MET WITH IYALLA FOR TWO HOURS TO DEAL WITH
SUBJECT OF REFTELS, HAVING CHOSEN HIM, RATHER THAN
COMMISSIONER OKOI ARIKPO, AS THE ARTICULATE DISSEMINATOR TO FMG
OF VIEWS WE EXPRESSING. EXPLAINED THAT ASSISTANT SECRETARY
NEWSOM PRESENTING SIMILAR BRIEFINGS IN SELECTED AFRICAN CAPITALS
AND TO OAU ACTING SECRETARY PETER ONU. I FOLLOWED THE TALKING
POINTS VERY CLOSELY AND BUTTRESSED THESE WITH EXCERPTS FROM THE
SECRETARY'S PRESS CONFERENCE OF OCTOBER 25, COMPLETE TEXT OF WHICH
IYALLA HAD RECEIVED OCTOBER 26.

2. IYALLA'S INITIAL RESPONSE WAS AN UNEMOTIONAL RECITATION
OF WELL-KNOWN FMG ARGUMENTS: U.S. MUST UNDERSTAND THAT NIGERIA,
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INDEED AFRICA, IS ON THE SIDE OF THE ARABS; EGYPT AND SYRIA
QUITE UNDERSTANDABLY AND EXCUSABLY STARTED WAR "ON THEIR OWN
TERRITORY, NOT ON A SINGLE SQUARE INCH OF ISRAELI SOIL";

ISRAELIS ARROGANT AND HOISTED ON PETARD OF THEIR OWN ASSUMED CLEVERNESS; FMG FAVORS ISRAEL'S EXISTANCE AS A NATION, ELSE WOULD NOT HAVE RECOGNIZED HER IN FIRST PLACE; NO PEACE POSSIBLE IN ME UNTIL ISRAEL "VOLUNTARILY YIELDS EVERY SQUARE INCH OF GROUND WON BY AGGRESSION"; AND SPEAKING AS A FRIEND, IYALLA MUST SAY USG HAS NOT BEEN VERY HELPFUL SINCE 1967, DURING A PERIOD WHEN WE ONLY COUNTRY WITH ANY INFLUENCE IN ISRAEL. HE WAS SAYING NO MORE, NOR LESS, TO ME THAN HE HAD SAID TO ISRAELI AMBASSADOR WHEN HE CALLED HIM IN TO ACCOUNCE THE BREAK IN RELATIONS. THE AMBASSADOR HAD BEEN "INTERESTING, AS THEY ALWAYS ARE, BUT NOT CONVINCING."

3. HAVING QUICKLY DISGORGED THIS RHETORICAL RECESSITY, IYALLE TURNED TO A USEFUL DISCUSSION OF SEVERAL POINTS THAT I HAD MADE. FIRST, HE URGED THAT I PROVIDE AN AIDE-MEMOIRE, WHICH I WILL DO BUT HAD DELIBERATELY REFRAINED FROM BRINGING WITH ME TO TEST HIS INTEREST. LIKENED NIGERIA TO A HUGE FRESCO, BRITTLE IN THE PLASTER OF MANY OF ITS PARTS, EACH LITTLE SECTION BEING CAREFULLY AND CONTINUALLY ATTENDED, A TASK THAT WILL BE MADE EASIER "NOW THAT WE KNOW EXACTLY WHAT YOU'RE DOING." OUR APPROACH SEEMS TO HIM TO BE VERY SENSIBLE AND HE HOPES WE WILL PREVAIL.

4. MORE SPECIFICALLY, IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND IN ALL OTHER PLACES NIGERIA IS PRIMARILY INTERESTED IN TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY. ELLIPTICALLY ISSUSTRATED POINT BY SAYING FMG HAS NOT PATIENCE WHEN NATIONS SQUABBLE OVER CAMBODIA AND KOREA; THE GOVERNMENTS IN THOSE PLACES SHOULD BE LEFT ALONE. NO SECRET THAT MANY AFRICAN GOVERNMENTS HAVE NO VIABILITY, NO FUTUTE, NO REAL REASON FOR EXISTING, BUT FMG WOULD OBJECT TO AND RESIST THE ANCROACHMENTS OF OUTSIDERS. LIKewise, WE SHOULD KNOW THAT FMG WOULD VIGOROUSLY PROTEST EGYPT'S OCCUPYING " A SINGLE SQUARE INCH" OF ISRAILI SOIL. BIAFRA TAUGHT NIGERIA MANY LESSONS, NOT ALL OF WHICH WAS HE RELATING TO ME AT THIS TIME, HE COYLY OBSERVED.

5. AS FOR THE OIL EMBARGO, IF THE USG HAS NO BETTER ARGUMENTS THAN THE ONES I HAD GIVEN HIM, WE CAN BE SURE THAT THE ARABS WILL NOT DESIST. WHY SHOULD THEY? THE CONGRESSIONAL AND PUBLIC OPINION ARGUMENT WORKS TWO WAYS, AND THE ARAB WAY WILL BE TO "FREEZE IT"

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THIS WINTER INTO DEMANDING USG PRESSURE TO FORCE ISRAELI WITHDRAWLS FROM OCCUPIED TERRITORY. THE FMG KNOWS; THE ARABS HAVE TOLD THE GOVERNMENT.

6. STILL, I SHOULD KNOW THAT COMMISSIONER MONGUNO'S RECENT STATEMENT (LAGOS 8691, 8929, 893) REPRESENTS FIRM OIL POLICY. NIGERIA STOUTLY SUPPORTS THE ARABS BUT SIMPLY CAN OT AFFORD THE LUXURY OF OIL POLITICS. "AT THIS TIME#" LOOK AT ALL OF THE MISERY ABOUT NIGERIA, AND I SHOULD REALIZE THAT NO GOVERNMENT COULD LAST HERE IF IT STOPPED THE FLOW OF OIL BECAUSE OF AN ISSUE HUNDREDS OF MILES AWAY. NOT EVEN NIGERIAN MUSLIMS

COULD BE PLACATED.

7. HE AGREES THAT USG IS ONLY INFLUENTIAL NATION WITH A FOOT IN BOTH CAMPS AND CERTAINLY IS THE ONLY ONE THAT CAN "USE MUSCLE" IN ISRAEL. BUT DID IT TAKE ANOTHER WAR TO POINT UP THIS FACT? THE FMG UNRESPESNTATIVE IN 1968, UNDER URGENT INSTRUCTIONS, TOLD THE UNGA AFTER A CRUCIAL VOTE THAT ISRAEL HAD ONE FRIEND LEFT IN THE ENTIRE WORLD, THE U.S. HE KNOWS ALL OF THE PROBLEMS IN DEALING WITH STUBBORN, ARROGANT ISRAELIS, BUT HE HOPES THE USG WILL NOT LOSE "THIS LAST OPPORTUNITY." FIRST TEST OF OUR INFLUENCE IS WHETHER WE CAN PERSUADE OR FORCE ISRAELIS RETURN TO CEASE FIRE LINES OF OCTOBER 22.

8. HOPES THAT WHEN NEGOTIATIONS BEGIN, USG WILL USE INFLUENCE ON BOTH SIDES TO GAIN ONE AGREEMENT AT A TIME, SIGNED, SEALED AND ANNOUNCED TO THE WORLD, RATHER THAN SEEK AN OVERALL SETTLEMENT. FOR EXAMPLE, ISRAELIS HAVE NO RIGHT TO BE EVEN NEAR WEST BANK OF THE CANAL; GET THEM OUT; OPEN SUEZ TO ALL SHIPS, INCLUDING ISRAILI.

9. HE LIKED AND WOULD REMEMBER THE PHRASE "UNTANGLE A COMPLICATED HISTORY." GOD KNOWS THE ISRAELIS AND EGYPTIANS HAVE TANGLED HISTORY. FMG IN PERFECT AGREEMENT THAT NEGOTIATIONS SHOULD START WHERE THE NATIONS FIND THEMSELVES TODAY, PROVIDED ALWAYS THAT ISRAELIS MOVE BACK TO THE OCTOBER 22 LINES. OF COURSE, IF THEY DO NOT, THERE WILL BE NO NEGOTIATIONS.

10. THE AMERICA THAT IYALLA KNOWS SO WELL, AFTER SEVEN YEARS THERE, IS FINALLY MOVING. NIGERIA IS GLAD FOR MANY REASONS BUT FOREMOST BECAUSE THE FMG DOES NOT WANT TO SEE A NUCLEAR WAR DEVELOP IN THE ME OR ANY OTHER PLACE AND IMPEDE DEVELOPMENT HERE.

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11. ONCE AGAIN, I SHOULD KNOW THAT THE NIGERIAN GOVERNMENT APPRECIATES THIS BRIEFING, AND I SHOULD GIVE HIM A WRITTEN STATEMENT AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, LEST HE FORGET SOME IMPORTANT POINT.

12. COMMENT: OBVIOUSLY IYALLA IS ADEPT AT CONSTRICTING HISTORY AND LEAVING TANGLED THOSE PARTS WHICH DO NOT ADVANCE HIS ARGUMENTS. WE DABATED SEVERAL POINTS, SUCH AS THE ASSERTION THAT THE USG HAD BEEN INACTIVE SINCE 1967. BUT THE OVERALL PRESENTATION PLEASED HIM BECAUSE IT SEEMED TO BE A REASONABLE APPROACH TO WHAT HE RECOGNIZES AS A THORNY PROBLEM. ESPECIALLY WAS HE DELIGHTED THAT NIGERIA WAS GETTING A SPECIAL BRIEFING. HE RECALLED THE SECRETARY'S ITINERARY BUT ASKED ME TO REPEAT THE STOPS ON THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY'S SCHEDULE. CONVERSATION HELD IN IYALLS'S HOME AND, FOR ONCE, WITHOUT INTERRUPTIONS. END COMMENT REINHARDT

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<< END OF DOCUMENT >>

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